

great inducement to the establishment of trade. No merchant, for instance, would bring European stores to Ferozepore for supplying the stations of Kurnaul, Meerut, and Dehli, with a prospect of 200 or 300 miles of land carriage, rendered peculiarly difficult by the nature of the country, and the scarcity of all means of transport.

Should Government decide on the further prosecution of this inquiry, I beg to recommend for examination the lines tinted blue in the annexed sketch map; that marked *a. b. c.* is calculated to cross the Cuggur below the junction of its tributaries, and to avoid a spur of high land, which I am led to believe, crosses the direct road from Kurnaul to Ferozepore. The line *d. b.* would be that of the supply channel from the Sutliĳ.

In conclusion, I beg to state that the field book and original protractions available. Field book and original protractions available. tions of my survey and levels, on a scale of one mile to an inch, are at the disposal of Government for any purpose.

Memoir on the Hodésun (improperly called *Kolehan*).—By Lieut. TICKELL.

Colonies of people speaking the same, or nearly the same dialect as the Hos, or Lurka-koles of Singbhoom, but of whose customs and history we are ignorant, may be traced from the jungles of Ramgurh (near Hazareebaugh) to the south and southward along Moherbunj, Keonjur, Gangpoor, down to the confines of Buna Nagpoor, where they are distinguished from the Gōnds (in Gōndwana) by the name of "Kirkees." Those colonies described to me by Gōnds are insulated, semi-barbarous, and confined to the wildest parts of that country. The country lying north and north-east of Gōndwana, and west of Gangpoor, and south of Surgoojia, are in all probability inhabited by the main stock, from whence these small settlements have wandered. These regions have never been explored, and are wrapped in the greatest obscurity. We only know that they are traversed by large streams. The Koil, the Hutsoo, the east and west Shunk, and the Brahminee, which flow into the sea, north-east of Kuttuck, or join

the Mohanuddee. The Shunk is said to be navigable above Gangpoor for tolerably large boats, and may therefore be presumed to become a considerable river in its passage to the southward; watered by such fine streams, it is difficult to imagine the whole of those regions, to be mere wastes of jungle, which would not repay the trouble of exploring them. But they must ever remain unknown, so long as the inhabitants retain their primitive habits, and aversion to visiting other countries, and until more enterprising people than the timid Hindoos, settle in their vicinity.

These remarks, vague as they are, may serve to define the limits of this wild and aboriginal race; for beyond the precincts thus roughly sketched, I am unaware of their language extending. It must be remembered that the inhabitants of Chota Nagpoor, although indiscriminately called Koles, are a totally distinct race, having different languages, manners, and origin. These latter, properly named "Oraóus," were the first known inhabitants of Roidâs (Rotâs) and parts of Reewa. Their sudden transmigration across the Soane, and which is ascribed by them to inroads of Hindoos from the vicinity of the Ganges, may be attributed to the expulsion of the latter by their Moohomedan conquerors, but at what precise epoch, it is difficult to determine.

It is these Oraóus who first give us accounts of a people called Moondas, whom they found in possession of Chootia* Nagpoor at the time of their flight into it. They state them to have been a wild people, living chiefly by hunting, and who offered no opposition to the Oraóus settling in the fine open tracts to the northward of Sonepoor, and cultivating lands of which they themselves scarcely knew the value. Being a peaceable, industrious race, the Oraóus gave no umbrage to their hosts, and very shortly after, the entire residue of the immigrants, who had for a time taken refuge in the uninviting jungles of Palamoo and Burhwé, passed over into Chota Nagpoor, where they remained in great harmony together, until the Hindoos came spreading further in, and attracted by the beauty and fertility of the country, by degrees made themselves masters of the soil. A Bramin from Benares, imposed upon the credulous Oraóus, by

* Misnamed "Chota."

trumping up a story about a child, which had been discovered on the banks of a tank at the town of Pittooreea, guarded and shaded from the sun by a Covra, or Nâg, and which he presented to them as their king. This is the present reputed origin of the "Nagbunsees," who to this day are the Rajas of the country; the Raj Gadee, or Païetukht, was first at Chootia, a town about ten milse south of Pittooreea, from whence the name of the country, "Chootia Nagpoor." What it was called by the Moondas before this event, is not known.

As the Hindoos spread and prevailed, the effect of their tyranny and extortions was to reduce the Oraóus into complete slavery, and drive the Moondas into open revolt. After a long struggle, the latter were compelled to confine themselves to the jungles of Sonepoor to the south, and the wooded slip of land which to the east raises Chota Nagpoor Proper above the rest of Central India. Wandering south-eastward, many settled themselves in the wild hilly tracts, now known as Kœhang, and in the immense jungles and mountains to the south and west of the present village of Porahaut. Numbers passed over into the low country, east of Nagpoor, now comprised in the zemindarees of Rahé Boondoo and Tamar, subservient to Chota Nagpoor, where mixing with the lowest classes of Bhoornijes and Bhooleans, (supposed aborigines of Bengal) they merged into a mongrel race, known as "Tamarias;" and a great proportion traversing the hills and forests of Kœhang, passed out eastward, into the open tract now called Singbhoom and the Kolehan.

The last are the subjects of the present memoir.

It appears that the Moondas, or as they now call themselves, the Hos, found Singbhoom on their arrival to be peopled by Bhooleans, an inoffensive, simple race, but rich in cattle, and industrious cultivators, who first allowed them to form settlements in the neighbouring woods, and afterwards permitted them to reside in the central open tracts. Here they remained together for some time, when the country appears to have passed into the hands of "Surawuks," a race of Bengalee Bramins, now almost extinct, but then numerous and opulent, whose original country is said to be Sikrbhoom and Pachete. Their arrival produced a repetition of the scenes which had forced the Moondas, or Hos, from Chota Nagpoor. But in the latter instance, the oppressions of the Surawuks ended in their total expulsion from the

Kolehan—in what direction is wholly unknown, though it may be conjectured they retraced their steps, for the name of Surawuk, is now unknown except in Tamar and Pachete, and then only used by the jungle people occasionally in speaking of Bengalees.

The Kolehan continued after this much in its pristine state, and only known to others by its lying in the route of hosts of pilgrims from Patna and Benares, &c. to Juggernath. The lands, broad and fair, excited the cupidity of many of these travellers, but their dread of the Hos deterred all thoughts of settling, until a party bolder than the rest, journeying from Marwar, took up their residence as guests at the house of a Bhooian Mahapattor, or Zemindar, where they remained on various pretexts, astonished the Bhooians with a display of their riches, superior knowledge, and by descriptions of their country; and ended by reproving them for living on terms of equality with a people who were Mlechis, or unbelievers, and as fugitives from another country, should be considered as subservient to them. The Bhooians desirous of having their own Raja, and emulating their councillors, entered into a league with the Marwarees, who procured a number of their countrymen to assist in establishing the supremacy of the Bhooians. In this they were totally unsuccessful, and the result of a long struggle, the details of which are handed down disguised with much fable in the traditions of the Ooria Bramins of the country, ended with the total discomfiture of the Bhooians, and the coalition of the Marwarees with the Hos. The former established themselves in Porahaut and the rich open plains to the northward, now called Singbhoom; the Hos withdrawing from this part occupied the remaining tract of open land, whose limits, described hereafter, constitute the Hodésun, or Kolehan of the Hindoos.

Up to this epoch no dates can be obtained, as the narrators of the above events, Oraóus and Hos, keep no account whatever of time. But from the introduction of the Marwaree Singbhunsees, and other Rajpoots who came to settle with them, a regular chronological history has been preserved in the Madela, or records of the Porahaut family; unfortunately I am now unable to apply to these for any information on these points.

It appears that these settlers electing a chief, whom they styled 'Raja,' and took up their abode for five or six generations at Porahaut,

after which a general division was made of the rest of the country the Bhooians had retired to, among the Hissadars or brethren of the Raja; the eldest brother took Anundpoor (or Sumijgurh); the second, Seryekela; and the youngest, Kera. The Raja also gave as pykallee, or service tenures to some of his subordinates, the Talooks of Bundgaon, Khursawa, Koryekela, and Chynpoor; of these Khursawa has become in a manner hereditary and independent.

In process of time the brothers managed to get into quarrels with neighbouring Zemindars; the Gangpoor walla (of Keonjur) and the Baboo of Anundpoor recriminated each other, about mutual depredations committed (by their orders) in their dominions, by the Koles; the Porahaut Raja's pykes harried Sonepoor; the Kera Baboo plundered Tamar and Chota Nagpoor; and the Koonwr of Seryekela and Raja of Mohurbunj found a bone of contention in the little but fertile tuppah of Koochoong, before alluded to.

In these contentions the services of the Hos were brought into requisition; promises of booty lured them into becoming steadfast allies of those chiefs who had won them over, and thus incited, they commenced a series of depredations on the surrounding country, which soon brought them into note. In return for the plunder which they acquired, they were induced to pay rent in the shape of occasional salamees, in different taxes, or "Russoomat," at periods of Hindoo festivals, &c. and the Kolehan was divided into Peers or Pergunnahs, twenty-four in number; of these the Moherbunj Raja through his Dewan at Baumenghattee secured four, viz. Aulapeer, Burburriapeer, Toëpeer, and Lalgurh, placing a Zemindar or Mahapattor in the latter. The Singbhoom Raja, together with the younger branches of his house, allied themselves with the remainder, and this order of things continued until 1831-32, when the Mahapattor of Lalgurh, disgusted with the exactions of the Moherbunj Raja, broke out into open rebellion, which led to a series of such contentions and outrages (especially as the Raja's emissaries artfully induced the ignorant Koles of the Mahapattor to plunder our territories of the Jungle Mehals, and incommode our communications to the westward, by cutting of the dâks) that Government was at length obliged to interfere, and in 1836-37 effectual measures were taken to prevent disturbances of the kind, by taking the Hos under our immediate control, and

withdrawing them from all allegiance to the Rajas of Moherbunj and Singbhoom.

Singbhoom, including the Kolehan, lies between $21^{\circ} 30'$ and 23° north latitude, and 85° and 86° east longitude; it is bounded to the north by Chota Nagpoor and Patkoom; to the east by the Jungle Mehals and Baumunghatte; to the south by petty states, or tuppahs, subservient to Moherbunj, and by Keonjur; and to the east by Gangpoor and Chota Nagpoor. These limits comprise a fine open tract of country, in most parts exceedingly productive, in others stony and barren, and separated from the circumjacent countries, above enumerated, by rocky hills and jungles. Singbhoom Proper consists of an extent of fine open arable land, to the north of the Kolehan, above 45 miles east and west, and about 18 in breadth, comprising the talooks of Khursawa, Kera, and Seryekela, also a portion of similar land, about 20 miles square, to the north-east, called Koochoong, attached to Seryekela, and along the west of the Kolehan, an imperfectly defined extent of mountains and jungles, including Porahaut and Anundpoor.

The Kolehan as now constituted, comprehends a tract of open undulating country, averaging from sixty miles in length north and south, from thirty-five to sixty in breadth. It is divided into two departments by a step about 500 feet high, running east and west across it. The southern part is rich in soil, and beautiful in appearance; but an absence of inhabitants, and proper culture, gives it an air of desolation. This happily is becoming fast remedied by the return of large families of Bhooians, former inhabitants, who had been expelled by the Hos. The lower country north of the step is exceedingly populous, but in many parts stoney and barren. The westerly Peers are situated among hills and vast jungles, containing a few fertile vallies; and Sarnda in the far south, is one mass of mountains, clothed in forests, where the miserable inhabitants, few and solitary, can scarce struggle for mastery with the tiger.

The Peers are twenty-six in number, Anjoodhia, Assuntullia, Anla, Burkela, Burburria or Birwarpeer, Burpeer or Jyntpeeree, Cherye, Chynpoor, Goomwa, Govindpoor, Gopinathpoor, Jamda, Kañawa, Kooilda, Kotegurh, Lota, Natooa, Lalgurh, Purliong, Rajabapa, Oonchdee, Rengra, Rela, Sath Buntria, Toë, and Sarnda.

I unfortunately neglected taking any census of the people, while assessing them, and when I had an easy opportunity of so doing. But the uniformity and simplicity of their mode of living, enables a rough estimate to be formed of their numbers, from the amount of the annual rack rent, which by way of Malgoozaree, has been levied on them, and the calculation I should think would be found on closer inquiry to be pretty near the truth.

The amount of Malgoozaree for 1838-39 was in round numbers	
Co's. Rs. 6,500 at 0/8 per plough,	=13,000 ploughs or men
of these at least $\frac{7}{8}$ ths are married,	=11,375 women,
Average of 3 children to each family,	=33,825 children,
Aged people, mendicants, orphans, &c. $\frac{1}{6}$ th. = 2,166	
	60,366
Gwallas, Taunties, Lohars, & other castes, $\frac{1}{6}$ th=2,166	
Wives of these $\frac{3}{4}$ ths,	1,624
Children 3 to each family,	4,872
	8,662
Ploughs concealed at assessment about $\frac{1}{8}$ th,	1,625
Total population, =70,653	

The whole of this country is traversed by numerous streams of great beauty, but useless as water carriage, being almost dry in the hot weather, and rapid torrents in the rains. The *Sunjiye* separating the Kolehan from Singbhoom, rises to the north-west of Porahaut, and enters the Kurkye, near the junction of that river with the Soobum-rekha; the Roro, twelve miles south of the former, a narrow, but deep and swift stream, and the Eeleegarra and Toorul still further south, take a like course above the step; the Dés Nye runs westward, and falls into the Kolekaro, near its confluence with the Koïl; and near the southern limits of the Kolehan, the different streams take a south and west direction, falling into the Bhundun and Byturnee, which last, running through vast and lonely forests, separates the Kolehan from Jushpoor and Rorwan, in Moherbunj, and Kalkapershaud in Keonjur. There are two water-falls on the borders of the Kolehan, which I have never visited, but which, by the description of the natives, must be well worth seeing. The Bunnye, running between Sonepoor and Singbhoom, is said to roll its waters into a

profound cave, from which spot it pursues its course underground, and is supposed to join the Kole Káro. The fall is called Paraá-ghag, and is a tiruth, but so remote from habitation, and buried in such deep woods, as to be seldom visited, except by the Sonepoor Koles, and Bhooians of Porahaut and Bundgaon. On the confines of Baumunghattee also, is a singular cascade, described to me as a single thread of water pouring down a walllike precipice of 2 or 300 feet in height. It is called by the Baumunghattee Oorias, Muchkandnee Jhurna; and by the Koles, Hakoo-yâmdah, meaning in either language, "The fall of the weeping fish," from some whimsical story of the fish complaining of the impossibility of scaling the cataract, to emerge from the dreary abyss, through which the stream winds below. The peculiar distribution of the hills in this country, running in parallel ranges, precludes the formation of lakes, which are unknown.

These ranges are not of very great height, the loftiest, which are in Saruda, not appearing above 1000 feet above the plain. They are however intersected in parts by profound vallies, which give the hills, from that side, an appearance of great magnitude. They are chiefly quartz, in all stages of decomposition, permeated by limestone rocks; smaller detached ranges issuing at right angles to these, are commonly of micacious slate. From Chyebassa, proceeding easterly into Koochoong, are low ridges perfectly parallel, about half a mile to a mile apart, gradually increasing in height till the series is closed by the Choivria hills in Koochoong. They are composed of loose rocks, resembling (if they are not) clink stone; but the larger ridges are of coarse granite. The northern part of the Kolehan consists in a great measure of sterile plains, scattered with quartz boulders, stones, and pebbles, some crystalized. The beds of the nullahs are a shingle composed of jasper (of all hues) green stone, quartz pebbles, and flint. The bed of the Byturnee is lined with flattened pebbles and lumps of jasper, of bright yellow, red, purple, and black, disposed in parallel streaks, or ribbands, as if artificially inlaid. The corundum is found in great quantities at Juggernathpoor on the upper step of the Kolehan, and several nullahs run through beds of argillaceous earth, from the brightest scarlet to pure white, which are highly in request among the natives. The whole of these streams wash down more or less gold, but the Koles know not how to collect it. In Singbhoon a

tolerable quantity is gathered by Hindoos, but of a third or fourth rate quality, also excellent iron ; of coal I never found any traces.

The open parts of the Kolehan are here and there scattered with a scrub jungle, composed chiefly of the Polass and Assun, on which latter the tusser silk worms are bred. The southern parts, where not cultivated, are covered by extensive plains of grass, interspersed with bushes ; entirely along the west boundary, are forests of saul trees, small and meagre on the hills, but reaching in the low rich vallies to a size perfectly prodigious. In Anundpoor, towards Gangpoor, are tracts covered entirely with the wild plantain, and many of the hills are clothed densely with bamboos. In marshy spots a strong serviceable species of cane or ratan is found. The wild mangoe tree is also very common in these forests, yielding a fruit far preferable to the common kind found in the " topes" throughout India ; it is small, round, and full of juice, as sweet as honey. The date and palm trees are not cultivated by the Koles, but are to be found near Hindoo villages in Singbhoom ; cheretta, wild indigo, and arrowroot are very common in the jungles. But to enumerate all the beautiful flowers which enrich these green retreats—the fruits and roots, to every one of which the natives attach some specific virtue or harm ; the inexhaustible variety of plants, shrubs and fungi, ferns, creepers, &c. which clothe in all varieties of fantastic imagery the shady dells ; or the cool banks of foliage-canopied streams,—would be a task far exceeding my powers, or the limits of this memoir.

The animals found in the Kolehan are the same as in other parts of central India, but not nearly so abundant as in better watered jungles, besides which the Koles and Oorias are inveterate hunters, and their attacks on game of all kinds are pursued on an exterminating scale (a description of their hunts is hereafter given). The elephant, which is numerous in parts of the Jungle Mehals, comparatively close to Medneepoor, is, strange to say, unknown among the remote and wild regions of west Singbhoom ; the gowér is common in this latter region—two species are described by the natives, a red and a black kind ; the urna, and smaller wild buffalo are very numerous about Anundpoor ; great varieties of deer haunt the hills, the saumúr (*C. rusa*), neelgye (*Dalmalis picta*) spotted deer (*C. axis*) barking deer, or Muntjac (*C. muntjac*), chikerac or four horned

deer (*C. chicquera*), all these species, though so shy when sought after as to be seldom met with, must be tolerably numerous, from the depredations they commit on the fields of gram, boot, moong, oorid, &c. which are planted near the jungles. The memina, a species of mouse deer, is also found among rocks, and underwood. The antelope is confined to the wide open plains of Chynpoor in Singbhoom, and very limited in number. Tigers and leopards abound. Bears infest almost every clump of rocks throughout the plain; they are all of the long-lipped species (*Ursus labiatus*). Hyænas inhabit similar localities, but are rare. There are no *wolves*, but there appear to be two distinct species of the jackal (*C. aureas*), one of which is much larger, stouter, and ruddier than what I remember of the jackal of Bengal. The cry also is different, and is a wailing sound not much unlike, though infinitely louder, than the mewing of a cat. At all events the Koles distinguish the two animals, calling the large kind (from its cry) *Tow Koola*, and the common jackal "*Kurmcha*." The little Bengal fox or Corsac (*Cynalopex insectivorus*) is very numerous, yapping all the clear nights long, during the cold season. The Indian badger or Ratel (*Ratelus melivorus*) is found in the woods, but rarely. Porcupines (*Hystrix*) are numerous, but being nocturnal, are seldom seen. The short-tailed marus (*M. crassicaudata*) is met with among rocks, but is one of the rarest animals known. There are three kinds of squirrels, the common palm squirrel (*Sciurus striatus*), the great red squirrel (*Sciurus macronnus*), and a large grey flying squirrel, peculiar; I believe, to the Kolehan and the Jungle Mehals. This last is exceedingly rare, as it lives on lofty trees in profound forests, and only moves forth at night. The wild dog (*Canis primævus*), *Koohia* and *Sona-kookoor* of the Oorias, and *Tannee* of the Koles, roams through the jungles in packs, occasionally visiting the flocks and herds on the plains. Their ferocity, speed, and cunning, have gained them a superstitious veneration among the Koles, and dread of their retaliating on their cattle, deters the villagers from killing them. Of these also there are said to be two kinds, a large dog, in shape and colour like a Scotch greyhound or lurcher, which hunts by sight, and a smaller, red, bushy tailed dog, which follows the other in packs of five to twenty, is less speedy and hunts by scent. The hare is larger than that of Bengal, inhabits gravelly ravines in scrub jungle,

and never takes to grass. Of monkeys there are only the two common species, the Lungoor and Mákor or Bunder (*Sara* and *Gye* of the Koles); the former live among rocks, the latter in dense thickets. Wild hogs are very numerous in some parts, but so wary as to be seldom killed. The rhinoceros is not known.

Birds of all kinds are scarce and wild, especially those fit for food, on account of the keenness with which the Koles pursue, trap, hawk, and shoot them. The double-spurred partridge is found among rocks, but is one of the most difficult birds to shoot, as it seldom takes wing, but creeps into caves and fissures. The deep moist woods afford immense varieties to the ornithologist, an enumeration of which would be useless.

Being a dry and stony country, the Kolehan is peculiarly prolific in snakes of all varieties; the covra is not so common as another species, the *Siarbinja* of the Oorias, and *Pago jarras* of the Hos (*Copias Russelii*), which is supposed to be equally deadly, and far more vindictive; it is a subgenus of rattle-snake (without the rattle). A large and beautiful snake, coloured with black and yellow rings, the *Sakom bing* (*Pseudoboa fasciata*) is met with in ploughed fields; a long thin green whip-snake, infests the rank grass jungles at the bottoms of hills; the hartoo, a slender, agile species, coloured like a ribbon with yellow, and coppery purple, infests trees. All these are venomous. The Python or Ujgur, (*Toonil bing*) is found in every jungle; it attains to dimensions which I have heard described, but which would sound too marvellous to be recorded without better proofs. Throughout Singbhoom, Chota Nagpoor, and the surrounding countries, a belief is current of a monstrous species of snake, the "*Garra bing*," infesting rivers swollen by torrents, which destroys both men and cattle, should they venture in. I mention it, as the opinion is so general, but it is probable that the sudden and mysterious deaths which occur in these mountain torrents, are occasioned by what seamen call the "under tow" and "back water," caused by the violent passage of water over rocks and deep holes. The body of a person thus carried away is never seen again, at least in the neighbourhood, and this total disappearance naturally strengthens the idea of his having been swallowed up by some huge animal.

An entomologist would find an exhaustless field of research and discovery in the jungles of this country. The decayed saul trees are

tenanted by magnificent species of *Prionus* and *Cerambyx*; the rocks contain endless beautiful varieties of *Coleoptera*; the deep woods, every where during the rainy season brilliant with odoriferous flowers, are enlivened by *Lepidoptera* of the gaudiest colors, and numberless varieties of grotesque shapes in the *Mantides*, *Phyllia*, and *Grilli*, infest every thicket; while tribes of ants, bees, and wasps, attract attention by the beauty and ingenuity of their habitations and nests in the forests. Of the former, one of the commonest species is remarkable for traversing the jungles, and marching along the paths in procession two or three abreast, and of prodigious extent. Scorpions and centipedes are fearfully common; of the former, a species infests caves and fissures in rocks, and attains such an enormous size, that had I not heard the animal described by several people (of different classes), and had reason to be satisfied of the general truth of their assertions, I should have looked upon the whole as a chimæra. In dry, konkerous soils, the white ants are a scourge. They appear, in woods, to be a kind of vegetable scavenger, reducing to powder the logs which lie on the ground in a short space of time.

Fish are abundant in every largish stream, retiring in the dry season to the deep pools, which are left when the main channel has run dry; but the *Koles*, by poisoning the water, destroy inordinate quantities. The mahseer, and the little fly-taking *Cyprinus*, miscalled 'trout' in Upper India, are not found in these lower latitudes. Doubtless these running jungle streams produce many undiscovered varieties of fish, but unfortunately, to this branch of natural history I turned no attention during my stay in the country.

The climate of the Kolehan has been found to be on the whole healthy, although the station of Chyebassa, which was unfortunately selected hurriedly, and without sufficient examination and comparison with surrounding spots, is not a favourable sample, situated on a barren, gravelly plain, interspersed with brushwood, and near piles of bare rocks. The heat during the day is excessive, but the nights are invariably cool, and the air invigorating and exhilarating, in spite of the temperature, owing probably to its peculiar dryness. A mile only to the south-east, at the village of Tambore, the country rises in undulating meadows, beautiful in appearance as an English park, and infinitely cooler than Chyebassa. These advantages in forming the

cantonment were either overlooked, or thought of less note than the nearer vicinity of water, Chyebassa being on the banks of the Roro. The Hos are more free from disease than any other people, in consequence of the precautionary measures they take—their nutritive food and drink, and the open airy positions they build in. As a guard against infection or fire their villages are small and scattered, and on the first appearance of any epidemic, they leave their houses and flee into the jungles, living apart from each other. Singbhoom, on the contrary, from the obverse manners of the Oorias, is yearly scourged by cholera, fevers, and small-pox. This latter disease, propagated by the Bramin inoculators, has within the last year spread with fearful havoc into the Kolehan, and most unfortunately simultaneously with the introduction of vaccine, to which the evil has alone been attributed. The rains are not heavy in the Kolehan, but the moonsoon is accompanied by violent storms of wind from the north-west, with severe thunder and lightning, causing many fatal accidents. None of that sultry oppression incident to Bengal is felt at that time of year. The cold season is truly luxurious—"a nipping and an eager air" without fogs or mists. March, April, and May are generally the only unpleasantly hot months of the year; during this period not a drop of water falls occasionally for upwards of six weeks; the aspect of the country loses every trace of verdure, and the dried stony soil reflects with unbearable force the rays of the sun. Vegetation is vigorously restored on the commencement of the rains, and as these are not accompanied by the gloomy sky and unceasing torrents which fall in the plains of India, the landscape is pleasingly checquered by passing showers, and the tender foliage of the forests glistens alternately with golden breaks of sunshine, or mellowed shades of green. To the south and east of Singbhoom, and in the most dreary and deserted parts of the country, are remains indicative of the former presence of opulent and industrious people, but so decayed by time, and engulfed in the labyrinths of untenanted forests, as to be unmarked by any record or history, save that they must have been of prior origin to the first known Bhooians of the country. In Lalgurhpeer, the remains of a square brick fort well ditched round are still visible; it is said by the Bramins to have been the seat of a Raja of the Raj Dom tribe, who with all his people, houses, and riches, were destroyed by fire from heaven, for having slain

a cow and wrapped a Bramin in the hide, which tightening as it dried, squeezed him to death. Only one man, a *taunty*, escaped, who was warned by the bullocks he was ploughing with, of the fate which impended over the place ; it is called Kesnagurh to this day. In Anlah-peer, to the far south, and on the borders of Rorwan, a few Koles of the poorest kind, have built a wretched straggling hamlet near the banks of what once was a truly magnificent, tank. It is called "*Benoo Saugur*," and is said to have been built by one Raja Benoo, who fled from the place owing to the incursions of the Mahrattas. This was probably during the days of the celebrated "*Morari Rao*," for judging by the trees which now luxuriate amidst the buildings, the place must have been deserted and in ruins full 200 years ago. The tank which I paced, as well as the jungle allowed me, is about 600 yards square. On the east bank are the remains of a handsome stone ghaut ; the west side may be similar, but was inaccessible, by reason of thickets ; on the summit of the ample bund surrounding the water, lie stones richly carved ; it is probable they once constituted small temples ranged around. In the centre of the tank is an island, crowned by a temple, now almost a shapeless mass. On the south-east corner of the tank are the debris of a gurhee or small fort, which appears to have been a parallelogram of about 300 by 150 yards, enclosed by a massy wall, with towers at the corners. In the centre are two sunken platforms, with stone steps descending into them, in which lie idols in all stages of decay ; some of these were buried many feet under a loose reddish soil, having the appearance of decayed bark. Among several Gunnèshes, Parbuttees, Mahadeos, and other gods of modern Hindoo mythology, were others which my informants, the Mohurbunj Raja's Mookhtar, the Burkoonwr of Rorwan, and several of their Bramin attendants, could give me no history of. Three of the best preserved of these I took away with the help of some Nagpoor Dhangars, not one of the people of the country daring to touch them. About 300 yards to the south of the gurhee is another mound or hillock of broken bricks, which I was told was the "*Kutcherry*" of the Raja. To the west of this, and all along the bank of the Tâlab, the plain now covered with jungle grass, and here and there cultivated with *gora dhan* by the Koles, is scattered with bricks, showing that a substantial town or bazar must have existed here.

Still further southward, about eight miles, and two miles beyond Rorwan, these remains occur in greater number, and better preservation, and the road leading to them is replete with debris of the most melancholy and dreary nature, rank grass waving over tanks, some of great magnitude, which lie on every side. Thickets and briars matting over richly carved ghauts and temples; old avenues and plantations whose symmetry can now scarcely be detected amidst overwhelming jungle, offer a vivid picture of what these deserted tracts once were; and the mind instinctively pictures to itself a once opulent and prosperous people, whose forgotten dust rests perhaps within the funereal shades of these ancient forests, as their fates and fortunes, alike unknown, lie buried in the elapsed vastness of time!

The temples at Kiching are still resorted to by pilgrims from the south, and kept in tolerable repair. There are two of them, but only one made use of in offering sacrifices, &c; it is in an unfinished state, the materials for the dome lying on the ground round about, as if they had been hastily abandoned. A narrow path winds up to the temple now in use, through dense thickets and forest trees, among which lie, thickly scattered, portions of elaborate sculpture, idols, and alto-relievo figures of men in armour on horseback, nauchnees, jugglers, servants, &c. &c. These two temples are part of a circle of sixty similar ones (according to the Déoree, or high priest of the place) which with sixty corresponding tanks are placed two miles apart, in a circle of forty miles in diameter. Of these, the temples at Kiching and some others at Odeypoor, on the banks of the Byturnee, are alone visited. A superstitious dread deters access to the others, and in truth they are buried in such awful wilds, as naturally to excite the fears of such a credulous race. The tank at Kiching lies to the north of the temple, and appeared to be about 300 yards long, and sixty or seventy in breadth; it is said to be of masonry, but I did not examine it.

In the vast saul forest which spreads over the boundary of the Kolehan and Baumunghattee, and about twelve miles from the nearest village, are two extraordinary pools of water, evidently artificial, called the "*Soormee* and *Doormee*." The former is about 300, the latter 200 yards long, dug in a perfectly straight line, and separated by a bund or causeway, so that they appear to have

formed a long water chaussee, or avenue, leading to the Kurkye river, which is not above half a mile off. No traces of paths or buildings or artificially planted trees were here discernible. Absurd stories are told of the fatal effects of the water on man and beast, by the Bhoomijes, who are the exorcisers of unclean spirits in the jungles, and the spot is carefully avoided by the superstitious Koles. I visited the "*Soormee Doormee*" while laying down the boundary in 1838-1839; we had great difficulty in forcing our way through the dense jungle, not the trace of a path existing, and I verily believe we were the first party, for many generations, who had intruded on this abode of utter silence and seclusion. There were fine fish swimming in the water, and the traces of deer in numbers round the bank, as they come nightly to drink there. It was with difficulty however I could prevail on a few to follow my example in taking a draught from the pool.

In none of these places could I perceive inscriptions of any kind, and I cannot here avoid expressing a regret, that my ignorance of Indian antiquities prevented my throwing any light on the history of these truly interesting, relics;—Interesting, as being situated in such unknown wilds, as indices of the entire revolution that has taken place in the political history of the country, and as proofs of these untrodden jungles having once been the seat of opulence, industry, and power, so utterly decayed, so long departed, as not to have left a record behind.

(To be continued.)

NOTE.—Although it is very improbable that any of our readers should be enabled to visit the Hodésun, with sufficient time at their disposal to examine closely, and carefully, the ruins at Kiching, and Lagurhpeer, I cannot help requesting particular attention to Lieut. Tickell's notice of these interesting remains, with a view to our procuring at some future time a more detailed account of them. The best thanks of all interested in the study of Indian History, are due to the author of the excellent paper now under publication, for his having (I believe I am right in saying) discovered in the wilds of the trackless forests of Chootia Nagpore, these singular traces of a people, and a power, whose name lives hardly preserved by even local tradition. His ample, and able statistical account of Hodésun is of real utility, and we must acknowledge that he has done well in foregoing a possibly fruitless search for antiquarian remains, which would necessarily have diverted his attention from more

important objects. As these however have been fully accomplished in the paper before us, I trust that, should opportunity offer, search may be made in the vicinity of these deserted cities for any traces which may enable us to arrive at conclusions regarding their history. A paper which I hope soon to publish (Journal of an expedition to the Naga Hills, by Lieut. Grange) will prove the value of similar research in a historical point of view, by the result of that officer's observations on Dhemapoor Nuggur, now like Lalgurhpeer a mass of ruins in a wild forest, but formerly the residence of the Cacharee Rajas. H

Sketch of the Physical Geography of Seistan, by Captain EDWARD CONOLLY, 6th Cavalry.

The southern limit of the lower ranges of that portion of the great Caucasian chain of mountains which lies between the 62nd and 65th meridians of east longitude, is well defined by the lower, or Dilaram road from Girishke to Furrah. From this line a vast desolate tract

Position. extends, part of that great desert, named rather loosely

by Malcolm, the Salt Desert. Sloping gradually to the south-west, it descends, like the plains of Tartary, in steppes, till its progress is arrested, on the south, by a high sandy desert, and on the west by a broad and lofty chain of hills (1) which stretches in a south-west direction from probably near Ghorian to the Surhud, and thus perhaps connects the Parapomisan mountains with the Southern Kohistan. The south-west corner of this thus interrupted plain, the last and lowest steppes, are Seistan (2).

The country so named, of which the length may in round numbers be estimated at 100 miles, and the breadth at 60, is entirely composed

Nature of the country. of flats, with the exception of one hill, (3) (the Koh-i-Zor) and in its whole extent, not a stone is to

1. This range is known by different names; in the latitude of Killah Rah, it is called, from a celebrated hill, Atishana near Bundau, Koh-i-Bundau—and opposite Zirreh Koh-i-Pulung,—the hill of leopards.

2. That is modern Seistan. In ancient times, the country known by this name was only bounded on the north by Ghare and Zemindawer, in the latter of which a learned orientalist has recognized Zabul. As the present sketch is intended solely to explain the map, and the ancient history and geography of Seistan and the countries around it will form the subject of a separate memoir, no allusion to the latter will be found here.

3. In the Univ: Gazetteer, 1837, you read, "The country is generally mountainous"? There is a small hill called Kohga, on the north-west of the Hamoon, which is sometimes surrounded by the water of the lake; at present it belongs to the chief of Laush.